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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6795
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0672
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4209
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7763
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5323
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 1192
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1107
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 001094

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DEPT FOR EAP/MLS, DRL, AND IO
PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/06/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM BM

SUBJECT: BURMA: ASSK FINE; USG URGED TO KEEP PRESSURE ON
THE REGIME

REF: A. RANGOON 386

¶B. RANGOON 601
¶C. RANGOON 982

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Classified By: P/E Chief Leslie Hayden for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Aung San Suu Kyi's personal doctor treated her last week for a minor infection in her hand. Her doctor told us she had a good first meeting with Minister of Relations Aung Kyi and that the two would meet on a weekly basis. According to the doctor, last week's meeting was canceled due to her medical treatment. Today the NLD "uncles" were informed they would meet with Gambari in Nay Pyi Taw. An Embassy source close to the regime told us targeted sanctions are working and urged the USG to continue pressuring the regime. End summary.

ASSK Update

¶2. (C) Aung San Suu Kyi's doctor, Tin Myo Win, told us today he had been summoned on November 2 by Police Brigadier General Zaw Win to urgently visit her house to treat an illness. Tin Myo Win told us ASSK was suffering from a terminal pulp space infection on one of the fingers of her left hand. He performed a minor operation and checked on her November 3. He told us she is now fine. This was the doctor's first meeting with his famous patient since July.

¶3. (C) Tin Myo Win said ASSK told him her meeting with Minister of Relations Aung Kyi had gone well and she believed him to be a nice person. She remarked that he explained to her his personal and professional history, including his study at a U.S. university, and then moved the conversation to politics. Tin Myo Win said ASSK and Aung Kyi agreed to meet once a week. According to the doctor, they were scheduled to meet last Friday, but the meeting was postponed due to her illness.

¶4. (C) Tin Myo Win said that ASSK asked him to pass a request to UN Special Rapporteur Pinheiro that, during his visit to Burma he meet with herself; prominent political prisoners, such as U Win Tin and the 88 Generation Students leaders; detained monks and their leaders in Insein Prison, including the chief monk of Maggin Monastery; and activists of the younger generation, including those detained after the recent protests. Tin Myo Win said ASSK believed Pinheiro would hear new ideas from these activists. She was especially worried about American Center students that had been arrested and concerned over the conditions young activists were suffering in detention.

¶5. (C) We also learned today that the regime has summoned the NLD "uncles" to Nay Pyi Taw tomorrow to meet with Gambari there. The NLD told us today they had been contacted by Special Branch Police and told they would be flown to the new capital tomorrow morning. The three uncles invited were U Aung Shwe, U Lwin and U Nyunt Wei. The NLD was still waiting to hear specifics of the schedule.

Regime Dynamics

¶6. (C) A contact with close ties to the regime, Phone Win (reflets), told us today he believed the senior generals have made the decision not to engage in any meaningful cooperation with the UN or a genuine dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi. Information Minister Kyaw Hsan's "clarification," published in the New Light of Myanmar today, in which he publicly rejected a three-way dialogue during the Gambari visit, was a disaster, he declared. Phone Win said that targeted sanctions are working and urged us to get smarter and more aggressive with them. He said the cabinet ministers are beginning to split into two factions. The hard-liners that do Than Shwe's bidding are the Information Minister, the

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Minister of Planning, the Minister of Culture, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Other ministers are frustrated, see the need to work with the UN, and at least promote some economic reform. These are the Ministers of Livestock and Fisheries, Trade, Transport (a 1987 IMET Student), and Finance.

¶7. (C) The Regional Commanders are frustrated and watching to see how the process plays out, Phone Win said. He urged the USG to publicly criticize the hard line ministers and single out their bad decisions, such as the decision to expel UN Resident Coordinator Charles Petrie. Phone Win also recommended that USG officials highlight in their comments the international community's willingness to provide humanitarian assistance and its desire to raise the standard of living for the Burmese people. They should emphasize that it is only the obstinance of the senior generals preventing efficient delivery of aid.

¶8. (C) Phone Win predicted that if things continue the way they are now, more public demonstrations will take place. He personally believed neither Than Shwe nor Maung Aye could last over a year without being ousted by a lower ranking military officer should the status quo continue.

¶9. (C) Phone Win said frustration among the working poor was growing and that more factory workers are starting to organize and strike to demand more pay and better working conditions. He relayed that a friend of his, a Chinese businessman, was having trouble with his factory workers whom he pays only 500 kyat per day (38 cents) to make rubber sandals. The workers demanded more pay and decent health benefits, which the owner refused. The owner brought in local government officials to threaten the workers. When he departed on a business trip to Hong Kong, the workers burnt the factory down.

¶10. (C) Comment: Even those who have long advocated a flexible, moderate approach with the regime, including dialogue, throw up their hands in frustration. They are counting on us to keep the pressure on to bring the senior generals down. As they sense their power ebbing, Than Shwe and Maung Aye try to tighten their grip. End Comment.

VILLAROSA